Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

A1.3

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

Case Studies

Group A
Protection Against Accidents

Hazard A1
Falls on the Level

Example A1.3
1946–1979
Second-storey Flat
(Non-HMO)

Vulnerable Group
All persons aged 60 years and over

Multiple Locations
Yes

Related Hazards B9
Excess Cold

Related Hazards B11
Damp and Mould Growth

Related Hazards B9
Crowding and Space

RHE Global

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Dwelling

Description

This is a two-bedroomed, top-floor flat in the middle of a three-storey block, built in the late 1970s and occupied by an elderly couple. In contrast to its neighbours, this flat has not been well cared for. Access to the flat is via an unheated communal entrance hall and two flights of stairs. The flat opens into a hall, off which are the living room, two bedrooms and an internal shower room. The kitchen is off the living room.

There is gas-fired central heating, with radiators in all rooms including the bathroom. The energy performance certificate (EPC) rating is a Band D, but there is no electrical installation condition report (EICR) available.

1
Front view of flat, the top right property
Photo credit: Peter_Fleming / Shutterstock.com

Deficiencies

Description

The shower room is very small (around 2.80m^2), with an L-shaped layout. The shower cubicle is within one of these two legs, and in front of it is a wash-hand basin and toilet, as shown.

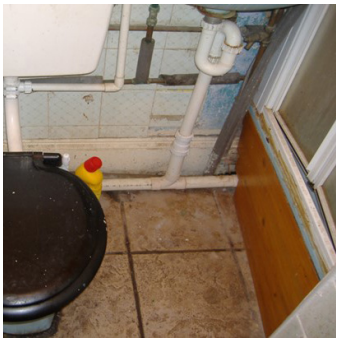
The extractor fan in the bathroom does not operate effectively and the radiator does not heat up; it appears that the radiator valve is seized shut.

The top of the shower tray is raised above the finished floor level to a height of around 300mm, with the overall depth of the shower tray being around 100mm. There are no grab rails to assist with getting in and out of the shower. The floor is covered with ceramic tiling that is slippery when wet.

In the living room there is a 100mm step up and down to get through the patio door to the balcony.

Externally there are two kerbs to cross to reach the wheeled bin store cupboards (visible at the right-hand side of the photo of the front of the flats). The external areas are well lit and well drained.

2
Raised threshold between living room and balcony



3
Raised shower tray in cramped bathroom layout

Relevant Baseline Indicators

0 Satisfactory or N/A

1 Not Satisfactory

2 Defective

3 Seriously Defective

Subject		Score	BI	Baseline Indicator
2	**Drainage**	0 1 2 3	2.3	There shall be adequate provision for surface- and foul-water drainage for the size and maximum occupancy of the dwelling. All drains and gullies shall be covered by a suitable grille or cover to prevent the build-up of debris restricting the natural operation of the system.
		0 1 2 3	2.4	All rainwater pipes shall discharge properly into the drainage system or soakaway. Rodding or access points shall be available to allow the clearance of any blockage.
		0 1 2 3	2.5	All access covers to drainage and other services shall be fitted with suitable flush-mounted covers adequately marked to indicate purpose.
4	**Sanitary Facilities: Bathroom**	0 1 2 3	4.5	Where a shower is fitted separate to the bath, a purposely designed shower tray must be fitted so that the step into the tray is no greater than 150 mm. All waste outlets and connections shall be sealed and free from defects.
		0 1 2 3	4.7	There must be a cleanable, non-absorbent water-resistant material on floor surfaces and extending on bathroom walls at least 300 mm above a bath and 1800 mm above the floor of a shower or shower tray. Such materials on walls and floors shall form a watertight joint with each other and with the bathtub or shower tray. Any shower shall have a shower screen, curtain or return wall that prevents water spillage to the floor.
5	**Sanitary Facilities: Kitchen**	0 1 2 3	5.9	A kitchen floor in good condition, with a sealed, water-resistant, non-absorbent and cleanable surface.
9	**External Space**	0 1 2 3	9.1	External yards, paths, steps, accessways and surrounds within the curtilage of the dwelling shall be in good repair, even and well drained. Accessways must be suitable non-slip surfaces, have adequate lighting, and should not have slopes of sufficient gradient to present a falls risk. This includes consideration to unevenness, trip risks and poor slip resistance, to any steps or surfaces within external space that is provided, to the front door, yard and garden. Where there are drops of more than 300 mm from paths, patios, steps, terraces or garden areas, guarding will be necessary where there are high risks of falling. All boundaries should be clearly defined and enclosed by well-maintained and suitable walls or fences. This also applies to structure, access ways, security doors and lifts.

Relevant Baseline Indicators

0	1	2	3
Satisfactory or N/A	Not Satisfactory	Defective	Seriously Defective

Subject		Score	BI	Baseline Indicator
11	**Security**	0 1 2 3	11.1	Adequate external lighting shall be provided to all means of access including entrances and external refuse stores, providing good visibility when there is no daylight.
12	**Walking Surfaces**	0 1 2 3	12.1	Every interior and exterior stairway, ramp, deck, porch, balcony walkway, terrace, landing and hall shall be maintained structurally sound, in good repair, properly anchored and capable of supporting the imposed loads.
14	**Lighting and Services**	0 1 2 3	14.1	Every habitable room shall have adequate natural lighting.
		0 1 2 3	14.2	Every hall, stairs and landing within the house, and every room used, or intended for use, by the occupant of the house shall have a suitable and adequate means of artificial lighting that is controllable and accessible which can allow lighting to be turned on and off and bulbs/fixtures to be changed and maintained safely. Two-way or PIR-activated lighting shall be provided to any internal staircase.
		0 1 2 3	14.3	Light switches that control ceiling- or wall-type electric light fixtures shall be located conveniently in each room for safe use.

Other Relevant Matters

0 Satisfactory or N/A

1 Not Satisfactory

2 Defective

3 Seriously Defective

Score	Matters affecting Likelihood of Harm
0 1 2 3	Drainage
0 1 2 3	Space adequacy
0 1 2 3	Lighting
0 1 2 3	Raised thresholds
0 1 2 3	Friction
0 1 2 3	Siting of taps, controls, etc.
0 1 2 3	Handles, grab rails, etc.
0 1 2 3	Appliance stability

Score	Matters affecting Harm Outcomes
0 1 2 3	Hard surfaces
0 1 2 3	Projections, edges, etc.
0 1 2 3	Nature of area, activities, etc.
0 1 2 3	Space adequacy

Likelihood of Harm

Scale Points
Likelihood of harm from this hazard over the next twelve months

Very Likely		1 in 1
		1 in 2
		1 in 3
		1 in 5
Likely	**Example Dwelling**	1 in 10
		1 in 20
		1 in 30
	National Average	1 in 50
Unlikely		1 in 100
		1 in 200
		1 in 300
		1 in 500
Very Unlikely		1 in 1,000
		1 in 2,000
		1 in 3,000
		1 in 5,000

Score
1 in 10

Justification of Scoring
Likelihood of Harm

The shower room is small and awkwardly shaped for the fittings, with a considerable step down from the shower tray, increasing the risk of a user becoming unbalanced. It also has slippery floor tiles that further add to the chance of falling. There is a step to reach the balcony from the living room through a wide doorway and two kerbs to negotiate whilst carrying rubbish to the bins. All trip hazards are located in areas frequently used, and therefore the risk of the vulnerable group falling is greatly increased, making the likelihood of a harmful event significantly higher than average risk as a result.

Harm Outcomes

Extreme

Death, permanent paralysis, etc.

Very Likely	50.0
	30.0
	20.0
Likely	10.0
	5.0
	2.0
Unlikely	1.0
Example Dwelling + National Average	0.5
	0.2
Very Unlikely	0.1
	0.0

Score
0.5%

Severe

Heart attack, serious fractures, etc.

Very Likely	50.0
	30.0
Example Dwelling + National Average	20.0
	10.0
	5.0
	2.0
Unlikely	1.0
	0.5
	0.2
Very Unlikely	0.1
	0.0

Score
20.0%

Serious

Chronic stress, severe concussion, etc.

Very Likely	50.0
	30.0
Example Dwelling + National Average	20.0
	10.0
	5.0
	2.0
Unlikely	1.0
	0.5
	0.2
Very Unlikely	0.1
	0.0

Score
20.0%

Moderate

Broken fingers, moderate cuts, etc.

Example Dwelling	59.5
National Average	59.5

These scores are simply calculated as the sum of the other three harm outcomes subtracted from 100%

Score
59.5%

Justification of Scoring
Harm Outcomes

The small area of the shower room reduces the risk of an unrestricted fall from the shower step and there are no obvious sharp surfaces with which to make contact. Externally, falling onto hard surfaces would increase risk of harm, but there are no atypical hazards identified externally to increase harm from the average. Therefore, there is no reason to deviate from the national harm outcome averages.

Safety Ratings

Scenario 1
As described in this document

Key

Category	Band	Score
1 Legal duty to take action	High	10,000
2 Discretion to take action	Medium	1,000
	Low	100

Likelihood of Harm
1 in 10

Extreme	Severe	Serious	Moderate
0.5%	20.0%	20.0%	59.5%

Category		Band	Score
1 Legal duty to take action		High	10,000
	Example Dwelling		**3,160**
2 Discretion to take action		Medium	1,000
	National Average		632
		Low	100

Score

3,160

Scenario 2
After works meeting baseline indicators

Likelihood of Harm
1 in 30

Extreme	Severe	Serious	Moderate
0.5%	20.0%	20.0%	59.5%

Category		Band	Score
1 Legal duty to take action		High	10,000
	Example Dwelling		**1,053**
2 Discretion to take action		Medium	1,000
	National Average		632
		Low	100

Score
1,053

Justification of Scoring
After works meeting baseline indicators

Reduction of the step to the shower to 150 mm or below will reduce the risk, but there still remains risk from the bathroom's awkward space. Also the balcony steps and route to the bin store remain, so the risk is still above the national average for this age of dwelling.

Scenario 3
After further improvements

Likelihood of Harm
1 in 50

Extreme	Severe	Serious	Moderate
0.5%	20.0%	20.0%	59.5%

Category		Band	Score
1 Legal duty to take action		High	10,000
2 Discretion to take action		Medium	1,000
	Example Dwelling + National Average		632
		Low	100

Score
632

Justification of Scoring
After further improvements

Provision of suitably positioned grab rails in the shower room and levelling the threshold to the balcony would be necessary to reduce the score to the national average. Provision of lowered kerbs/a ramp to the bin store access would reduce the risk further to a lower likelihood than average.

Other Relevant Legislation and Guidance

Updates

Matters for consideration listed in this section were correct at the time of publication. For the most up-to-date legislation and guidance in these areas, please visit the gov.uk website.